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FEB 98

FIGHTNING AND STARS
PART ONE OF FOUR ★★☆☆

STARMAN



GUEST-STARRING
THE POWER OF SHAZAM!



DIRECT SALES

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ROBINSON • HARRIS • VON CRAWBODGER

I know it must seem to you...all of you...even to my son Jack...

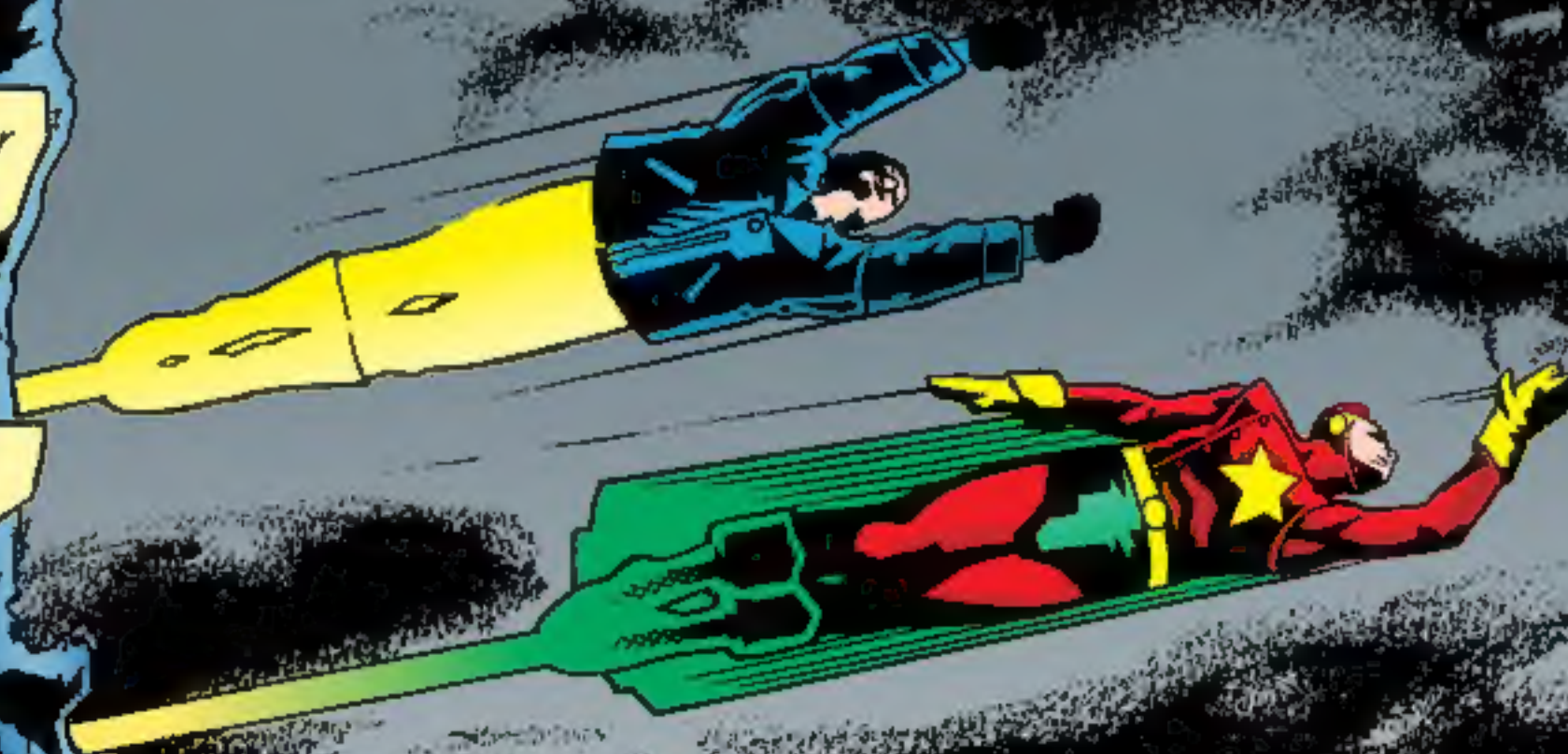
...That back in the War years, we...America's superheroes, I mean...That we were one big group of gangbusters.

All fists and smiles and heroism, standing side by side to face the Nazi horde.

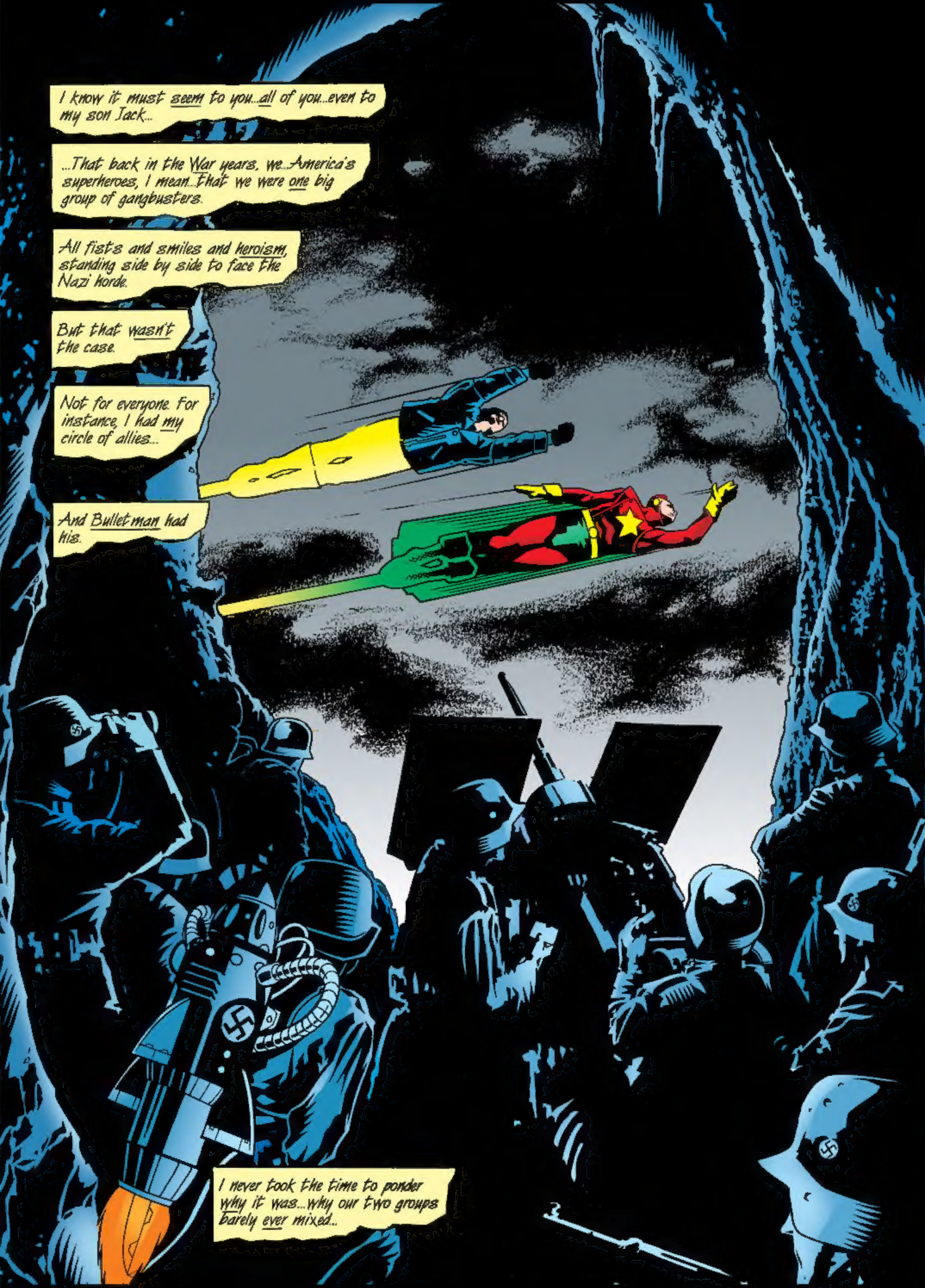
But that wasn't the case.

Not for everyone. For instance, I had my circle of allies...

And Bulletman had his.



I never took the time to ponder why it was...why our two groups barely ever mixed...





...apart from that
one time

LIGHTNING AND STARS ★ PART ONE

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STURM und DRANG

The Alaskan tundra... where we were... was freezing.

White... all I recall was white... and my fear.

...Fear my lungs would freeze... I feared it more than any goose-stepping jet soldier, that's for sure.

I was lucky. I'd worn one of the special costumes I sometimes employed for unique missions.

This one was insulated. It kept me warm.

But Bulletman...

...He didn't seem to need it.

In fact I think he even discarded his jacket in the heat of battle.

I think.

Though to be honest I don't clearly recall.

There were more than enough other things to draw my attention.

Too many.

Too many foes.

If I wasn't careful I might fail to notice one of them...

...And that would have been my undoing.

STARMAN!
BEHIND
YOU!

It happened in the time it takes to glance left to right.

A blur. Red and silver.
A German falling...





And then on
with it!



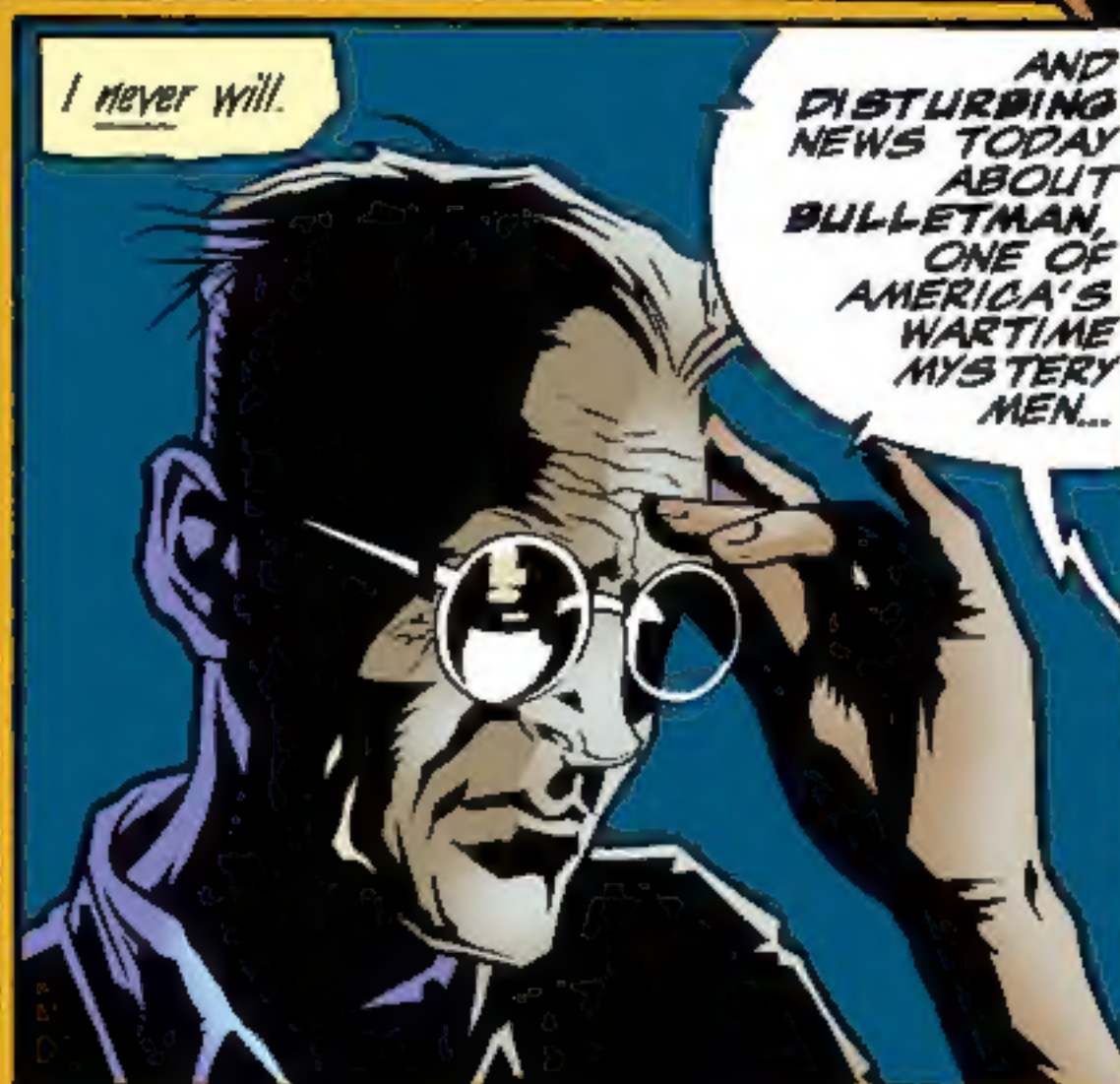
THAT
WAS
CLOSE!

I COULD
HAVE BEEN
KILLED!

FORGET IT.



Of course I didn't.

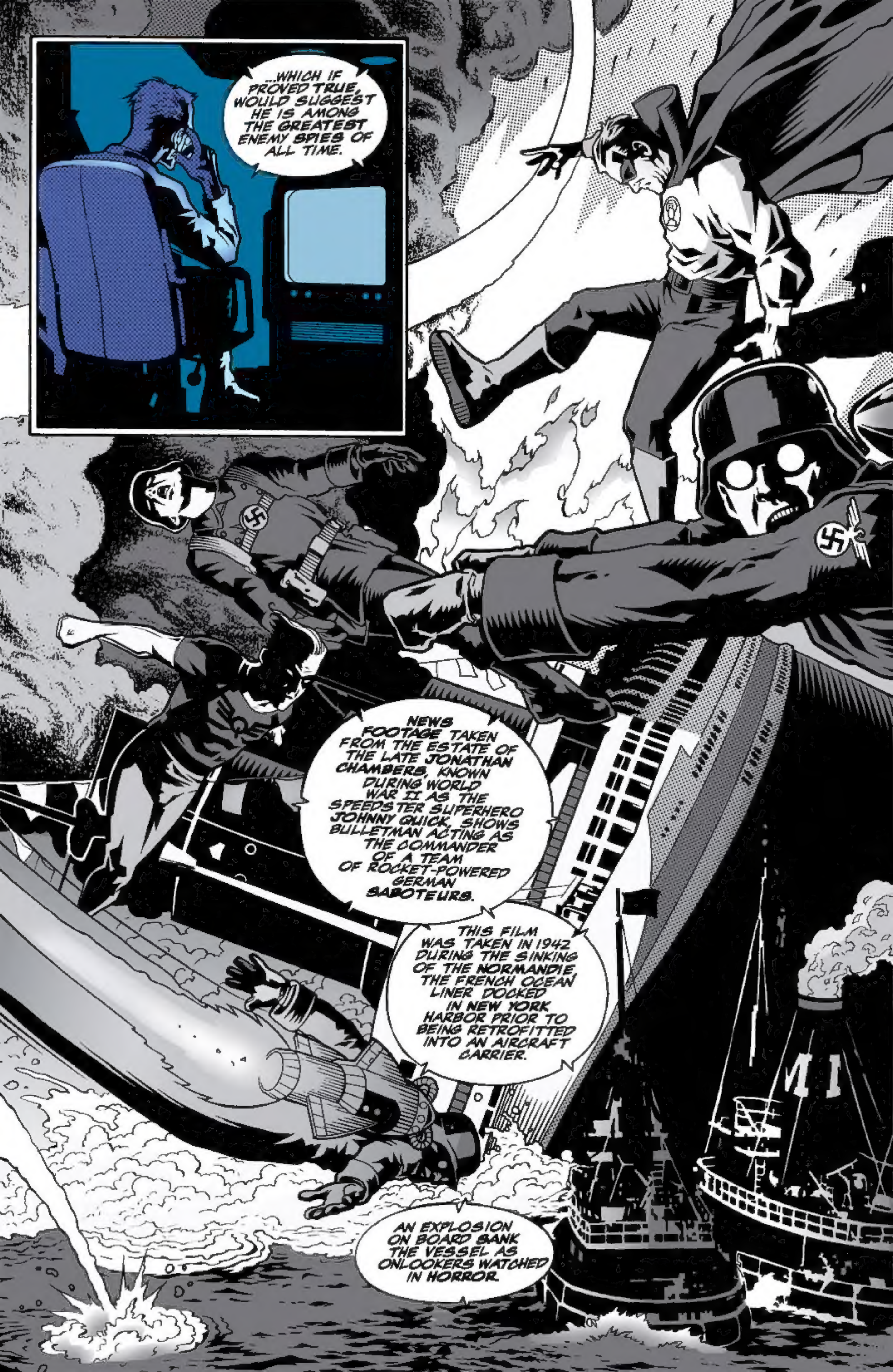


I never will.

AND
DISTURBING
NEWS TODAY
ABOUT
BULLETMAN,
ONE OF
AMERICA'S
WARTIME
MYSTERY
MEN...



...WHICH IF
PROVED TRUE,
WOULD SUGGEST
HE IS AMONG
THE GREATEST
ENEMY SPIES OF
ALL TIME.



NEWS
FOOTAGE TAKEN
FROM THE ESTATE OF
THE LATE JONATHAN
CHAMBERS, KNOWN
DURING WORLD
WAR II AS THE
SPEEDSTER SUPERHERO
JOHNNY QUICK, SHOWS
BULLETMAN ACTING AS
THE COMMANDER
OF A TEAM
OF ROCKET-POWERED
GERMAN
SABOTEURS.

THIS FILM
WAS TAKEN IN 1942
DURING THE SINKING
OF THE NORMANDIE
THE FRENCH OCEAN
LINER DOCKED
IN NEW YORK
HARBOR PRIOR TO
BEING RETROFITTED
INTO AN AIRCRAFT
CARRIER.

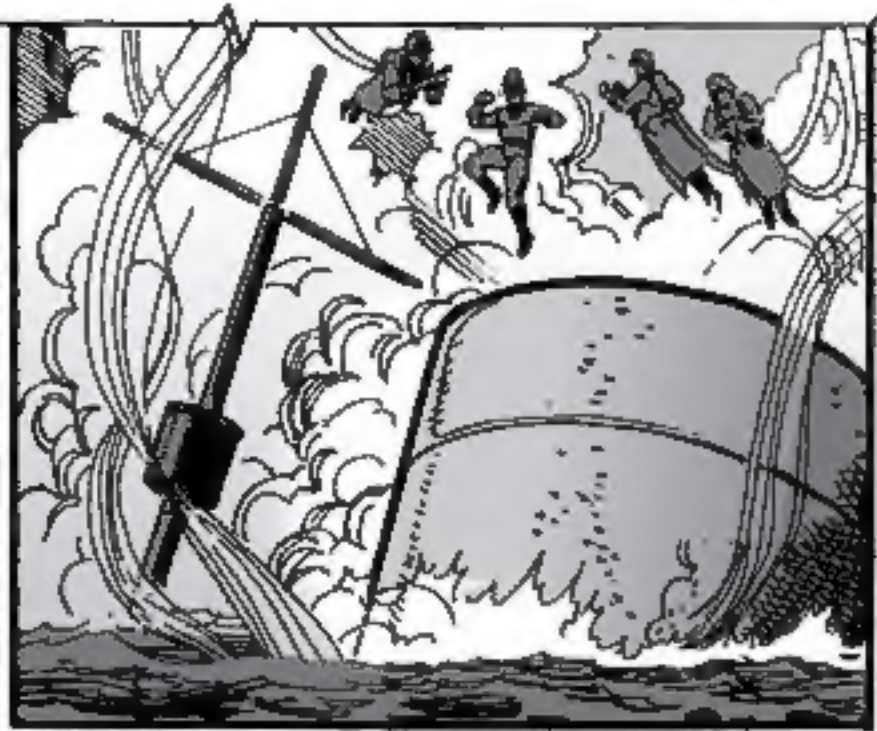
AN EXPLOSION
ON BOARD SANK
THE VESSEL AS
ONLOOKERS WATCHED
IN HORROR.




THE FOOTAGE AT FIRST SHOWED SOME OF THE ALL STAR SQUADRON COMBATING JET-POWERED OPPONENTS, WHO IT WAS BELIEVED WERE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE SABOTAGE.

BUT IT IS LATER IN THE FILM, AS THE FIGHT PROGRESSES, THAT BULLETMAN'S FORM CAN BE SEEN FURTHER AWAY GIVING DIRECTION TO THE NAZIS.

"SCIENTISTS AT S.T.A.R. LABS WERE ABLE TO BLOW UP SECTIONS OF THE FILM USING COMPUTERS, GIVING A POSITIVE ID OF JAMES BARR, THE MAN WHO IN THE 1940s FLEW THE SKIES AS BULLETMAN."






ALTHOUGH ANOTHER ANONYMOUS CLAIM SUGGESTED THAT IT WAS POSSIBLE BARR HAD SHARED HIS TECHNOLOGY WITH VON BRAUN, GIVING THE NAZI SCIENTIST THE DATA NEEDED TO CREATE THE SILENT V2 ROCKETS--

FURTHER CLAIMS WERE THEN LEAKED BY UNKNOWN SOURCES, CITING BARR'S "BULLET TECHNOLOGY" AS BEING DERIVED FROM THE ROCKET SCIENCE OF GERMANY'S VON BRAUN.

--USED LATER ON IN GERMANY'S BOMBING CAMPAIGN OF ENGLAND.



ONE FURTHER ANONYMOUS CLAIM SUGGESTED THAT BARR WAS A DEEP-COVER SPY FOR THE GERMANS, WHO REPORTED BACK TO BERLIN ON SUPERHERO ACTIVITY IN AMERICA.

IN THE TIME SINCE THESE ACCUSATIONS WERE MADE, BARR HAD BEEN TAKEN INTO CUSTODY BY THE SECRET SERVICE BUT LATER ESCAPED.

HIS CURRENT WHEREABOUTS ARE UNKNOWN ALTHOUGH A NATIONWIDE MANHUNT IS CURRENTLY...



HELLO?



YES, THIS IS TED KNIGHT, I'D LIKE TO GET A MESSAGE TO JACK WESTON.



SO
HOW YOU
BEEN, JACKIE
BOY?

CRAZY, MAN.
CRAZY...



...I BEEN
FIGHTING BAD
GUYS.

FOR
SURE
CRAZY.



WHY YOU HERE?
YOU WANT SOME-
THING ELSE ON
YOU?

NOT TODAY. I'M
JUST HERE 'CAUSE IT
FEELS SAFE AND FAMILIAR.
AN' I'VE BEEN UP TO MY
NECK IN THE STRANGE AND
DANGEROUS. THOUGH MY GIRL-
FRIEND IS THINKING OF GETTING
SOMETHING, MAYBE SOON. IF
SHE IS, I'LL BRING HER BY.



WHOA,
HOPALONG.
WHAT'S THIS
ABOUT A GIRLY?
SINCE WHEN YOU
GOT A STEADY
THING? YOU
ALWAYS BEEN
HIT AND RIN.

I'M CHANGING.
WHAT CAN I TELL
YOU? THIS LIFE...I'M
DIFFERENT.



YOU GOT
A LOAD OF
POLICE
FRIENDS NOW,
I HEAR.

THAT WAS A
SURPRISE, YOU AND
COPS. YOU USED TO
HATE COPS.



COPS WERE
AUTHORITY. I
HATED THAT.
NOW...

...NOW I
GUESS I'M
AUTHORITY.



ANYWAY IT'S NOT
LIKE I'M FRIENDS WITH
COPS. I'M FRIENDS WITH THE
O'DARES IS ALL. BILLY
O'DARE WAS MY DAD'S
BUDDY. HIS CHILDREN ARE
MINE. SIMPLE.

COP'S A
COP'S A COP
IS WHAT YOU
USED TO
SAY.

YEAH,
WELL...I USED
TO SAY A LOT
OF THINGS.

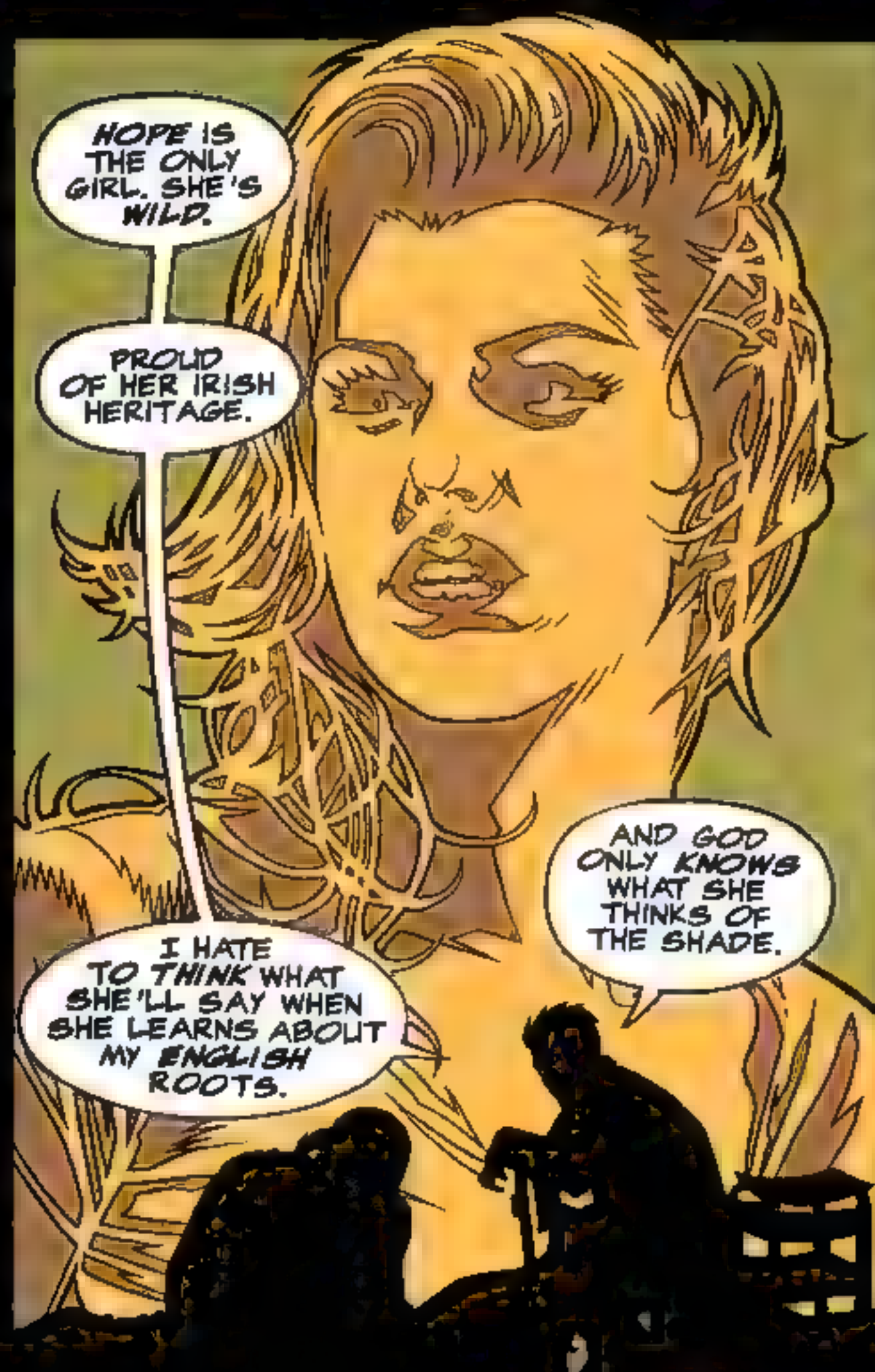
SO
WHO ARE
THEY? THESE
O'DARES?



WELL, THERE'S CLARENCE. HE'S THE OLDEST.

JUST GOT PROMOTED WAY HIGH THROUGH THE RANKS. NOW HE'S THE COMMISSIONER'S SUPERHERO LIAISON.

MARRIED... ONLY ONE OF THE FAMILY WHO IS. HIS WIFE IS GREAT.



HOPE IS THE ONLY GIRL. SHE'S WILD.

PROUD OF HER IRISH HERITAGE.

I HATE TO THINK WHAT SHE'LL SAY WHEN SHE LEARNS ABOUT MY ENGLISH ROOTS.

AND GOD ONLY KNOWS WHAT SHE THINKS OF THE SHADE.



MASON'S THE QUIET ONE. STILL IN UNIFORM. LIKES IT THAT WAY. BUT YOU SEE HIM IN ACTION, HE'S...

ALL I'LL SAY IS I WISH I HAD SOME OF HIS MOVES.

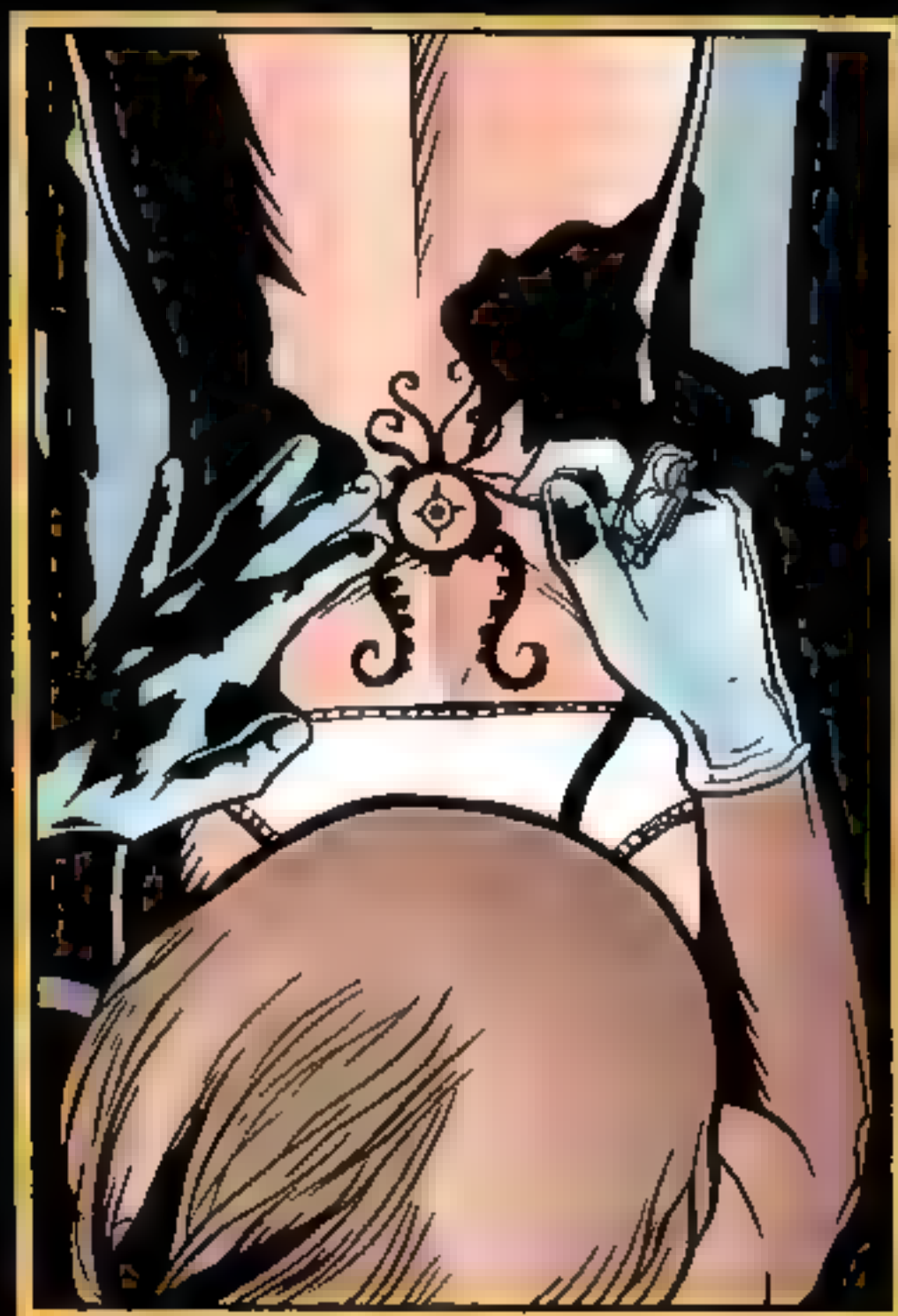
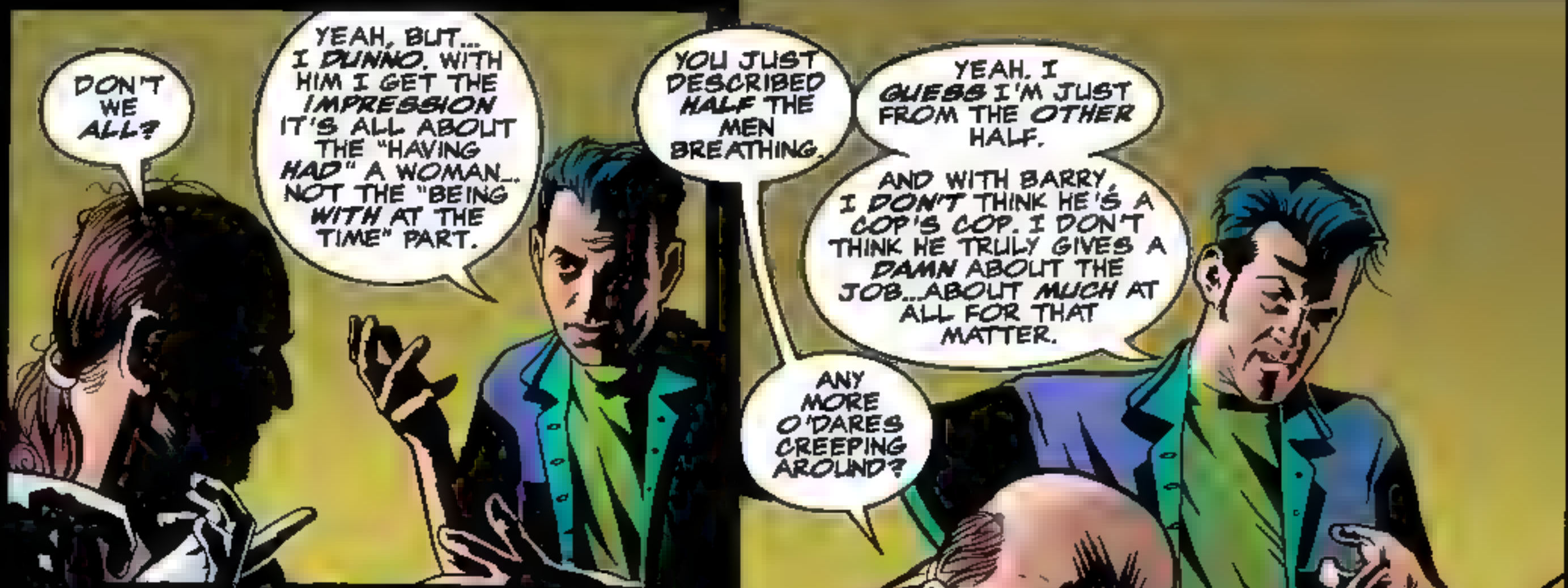


BARRY IS...WELL... HE'S BARRY.

I KNOW HIM THE LEAST.

I DON'T THINK I'VE SAID MORE THAN THREE WORDS TO HIM THE WHOLE TIME.

HE LIKES THE LADIES.



HE THE ONE WITH THE MUSTACHIOS? ALWAYS SMOKING?

THINK I SAW HIM ON THE NEWS ONCE. GOOD WITH A GUN.



IT'S NOT THAT I DISLIKE THEM, IT'S... I KNOW I'M THE CITY'S HERO NOW. I KNOW OPAL FEELS SAFER FOR HAVING A STARMAN TO FLY OVER IT, KEEPING GUARD.

BUT I'M NOT SURE EVERY COP FEELS THAT WAY.

LET ME JUST SAY THIS...

...I CAN'T SEE A DAY WHEN THE COPS OF THIS CITY WILL EVER STAND UP FOR ME.

AND YOUR GIRL? WHAT'S HER NAME?

SADIE. SHE'S A REAL HONEY. KNOWS ABOUT OLD STUFF... OLD MOVIES.

AND... LIKE A COP'S WIFE, SHE CAN LIVE WITH THE FACT THAT I'M OUT THERE RISKING MY LIFE AND ALL.

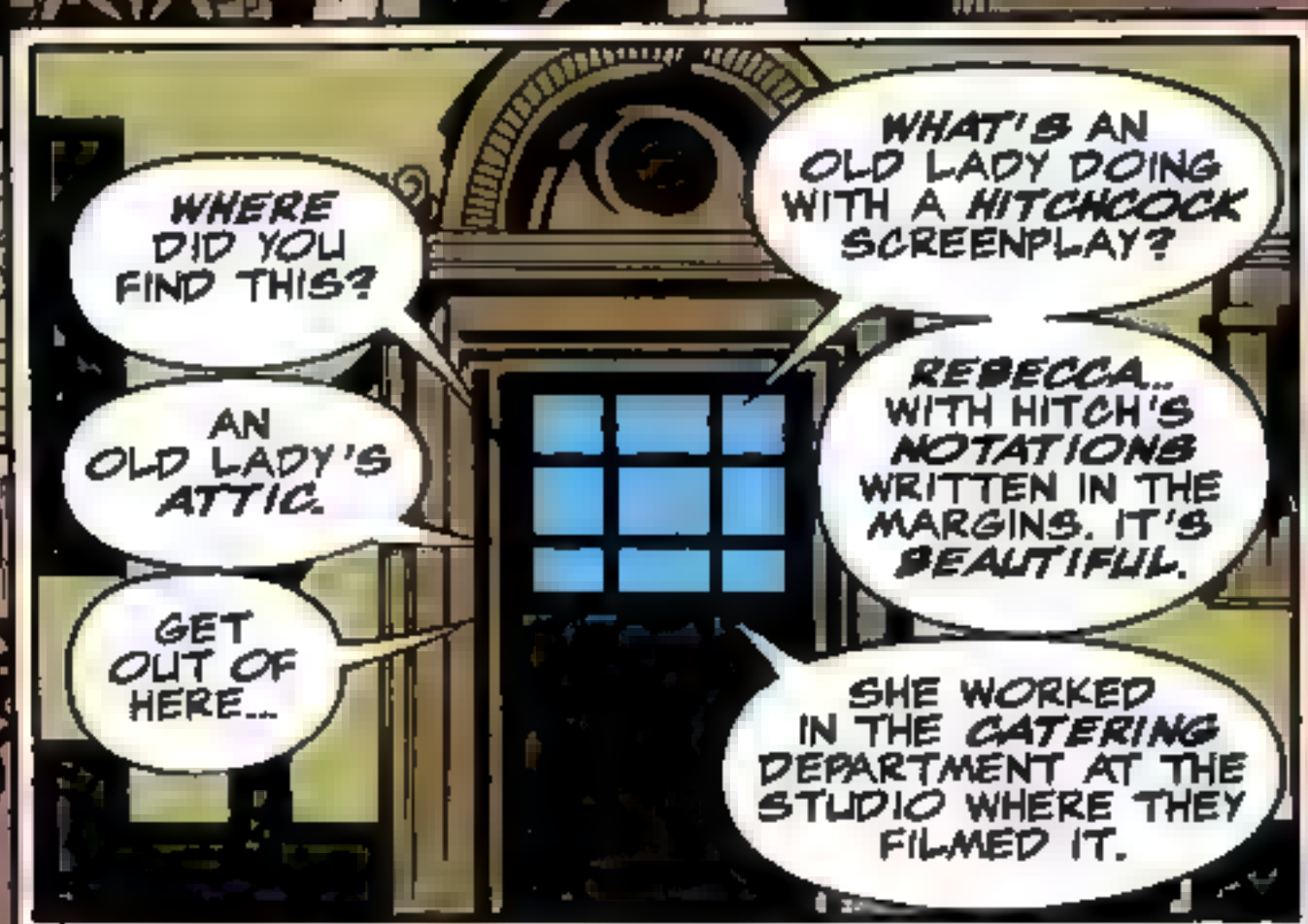
YOU SOUND PRETTY SERIOUS ABOUT HER.

YEAH, I GUESS I DO AT THAT.

GOTTA GO, MAN. I'LL SEE YOU, MAYBE I'LL GET SOMETHING ON MY BACK... MAYBE THAT SHOULD BE MY NEXT TAT.

WHENEVER YOU'RE READY. I GOT THE INK.





WHERE DID YOU FIND THIS?

AN OLD LADY'S ATTIC.

GET OUT OF HERE...

WHAT'S AN OLD LADY DOING WITH A HITCHCOCK SCREENPLAY?

REBECCA... WITH HITCH'S NOTATIONS WRITTEN IN THE MARGINS. IT'S BEAUTIFUL.

SHE WORKED IN THE CATERING DEPARTMENT AT THE STUDIO WHERE THEY FILMED IT.



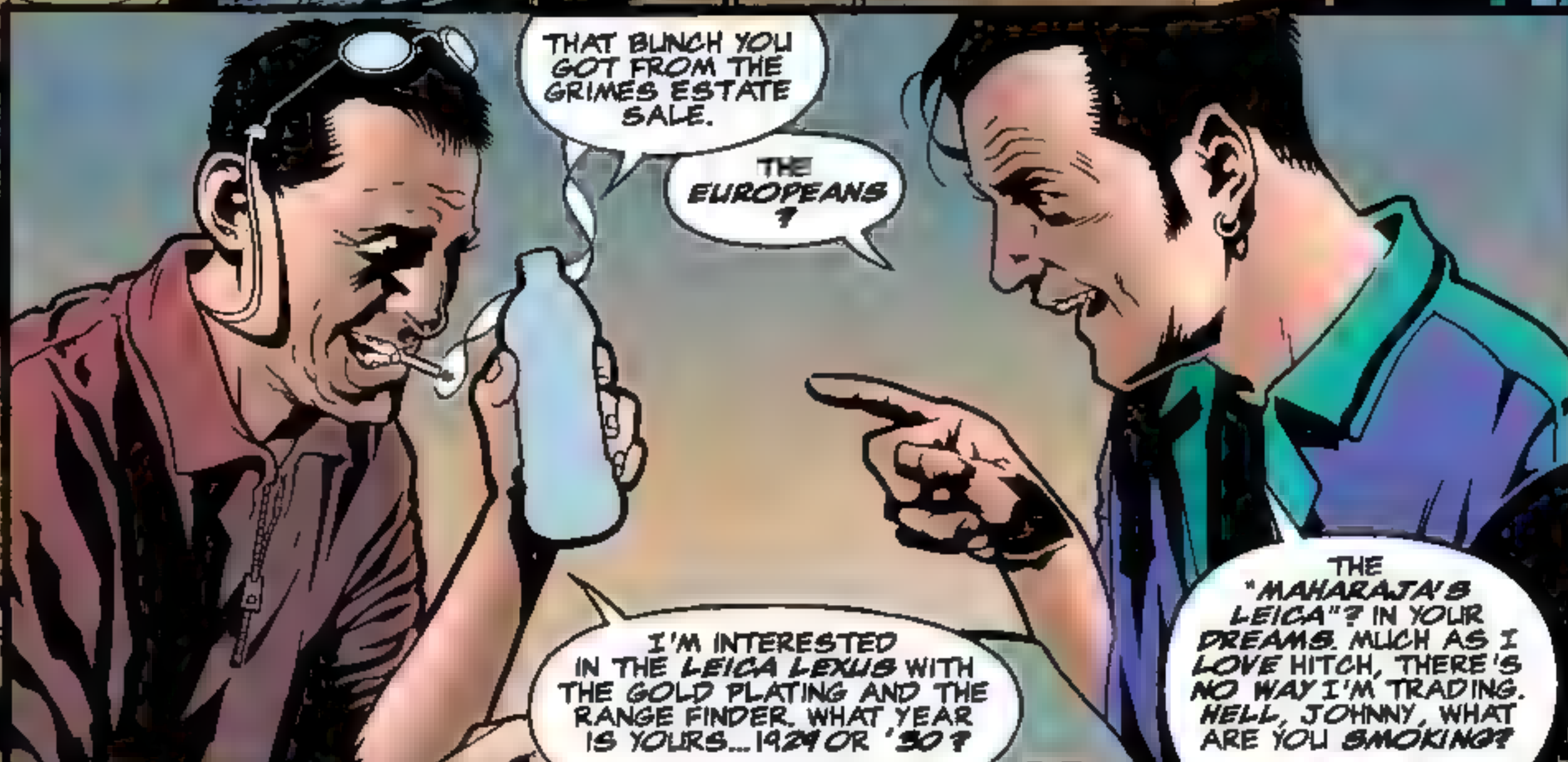
I THINK HITCH GAVE IT TO HER.

HE ALWAYS DID LIKE HIS FOOD.

HOW MUCH?

YOU GOT THOSE CAMERAS?

WHICH?



THAT BUNCH YOU GOT FROM THE GRIMES ESTATE SALE.

THE EUROPEANS?

I'M INTERESTED IN THE LEICA LEXUS WITH THE GOLD PLATING AND THE RANGE FINDER. WHAT YEAR IS YOURS... 1929 OR '30?

THE "MAHARAJA'S LEICA"? IN YOUR DREAMS. MUCH AS I LOVE HITCH, THERE'S NO WAY I'M TRADING. HELL, JOHNNY, WHAT ARE YOU SMOKING?



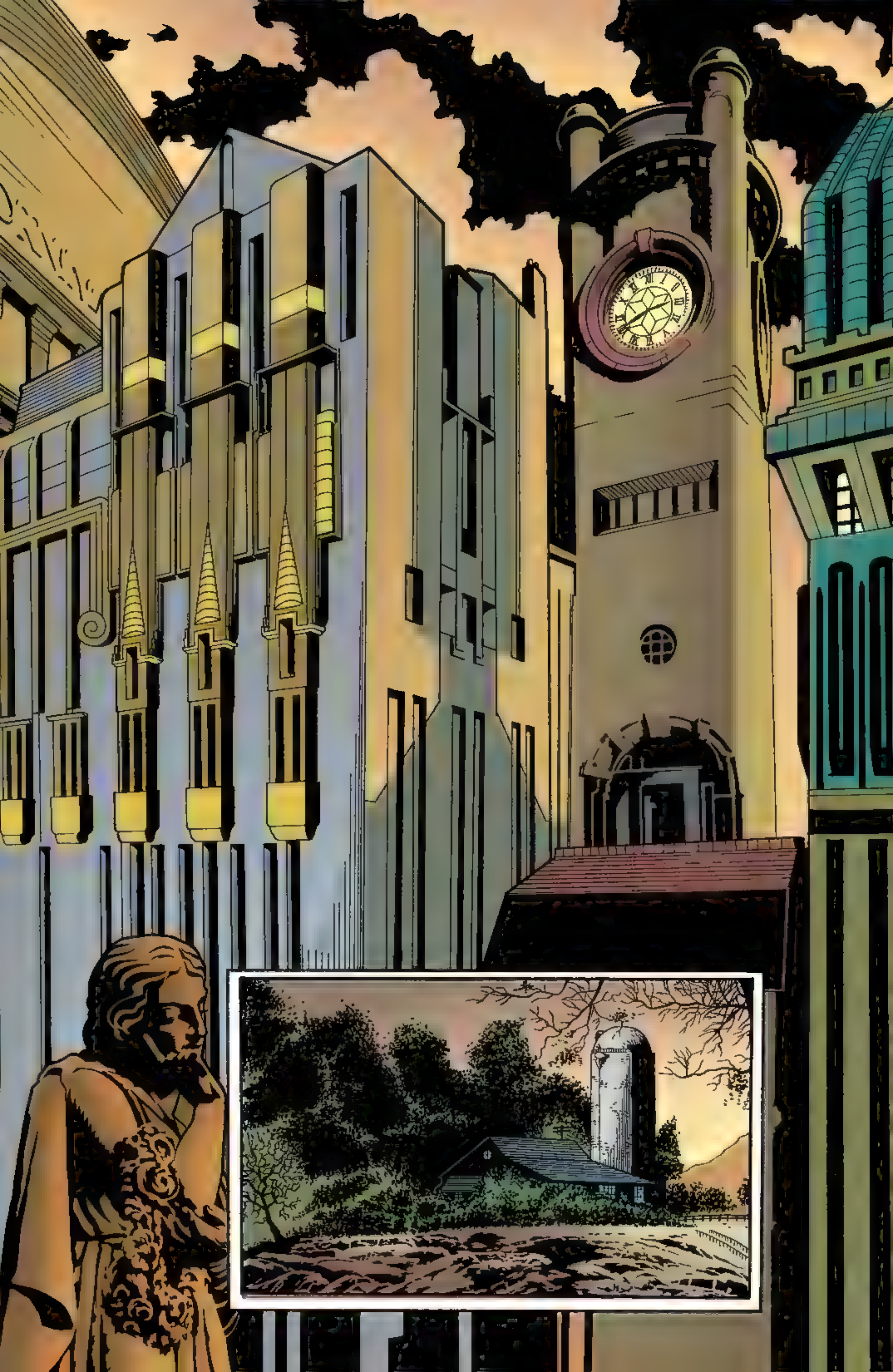
WELL, LET ME THINK MAYBE THERE'S SOMETHING ELSE OF YOURS I WANT.

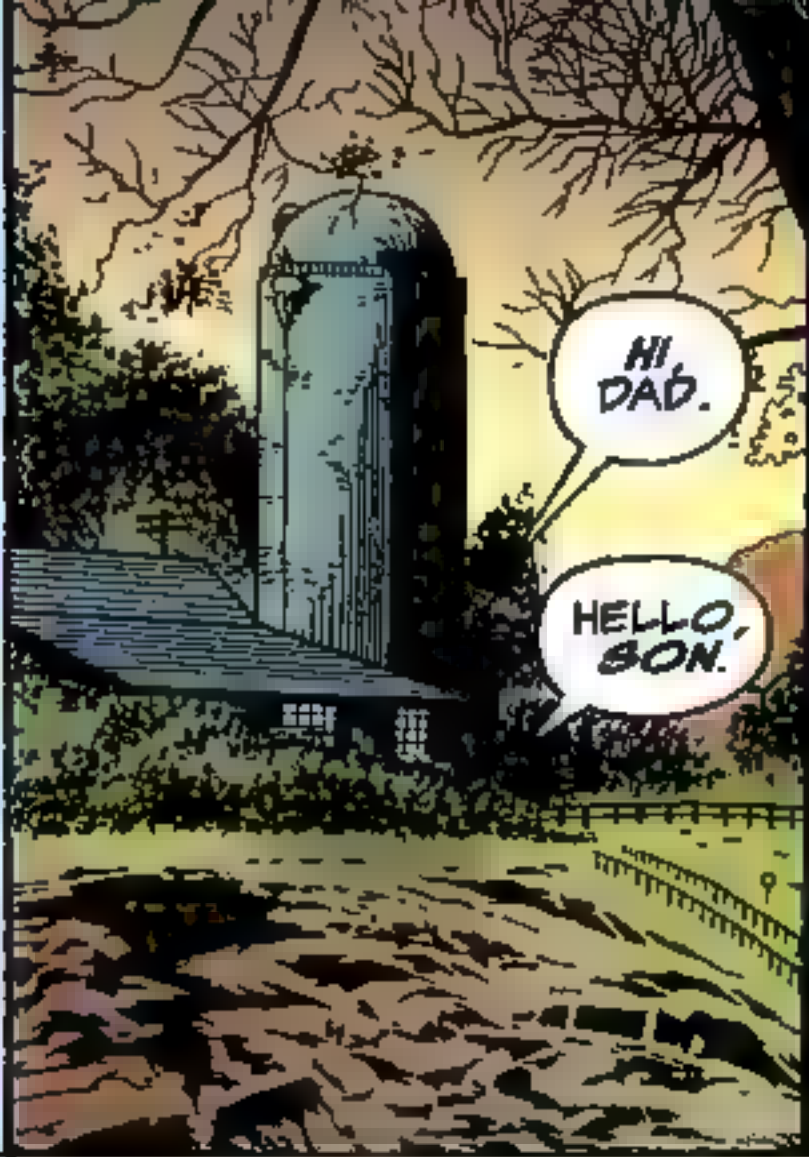
I GOT PLENTY.

SO WHEN WE GONNA SEE IT ALL? WHEN WE GONNA SEE THIS NEW STORE OF YOURS THAT I'VE HEARD WHISPERS ABOUT?

WHEN IT'S READY.

WHEN IT'S PERFECT.





HI,
DAD.

HELLO,
SON.



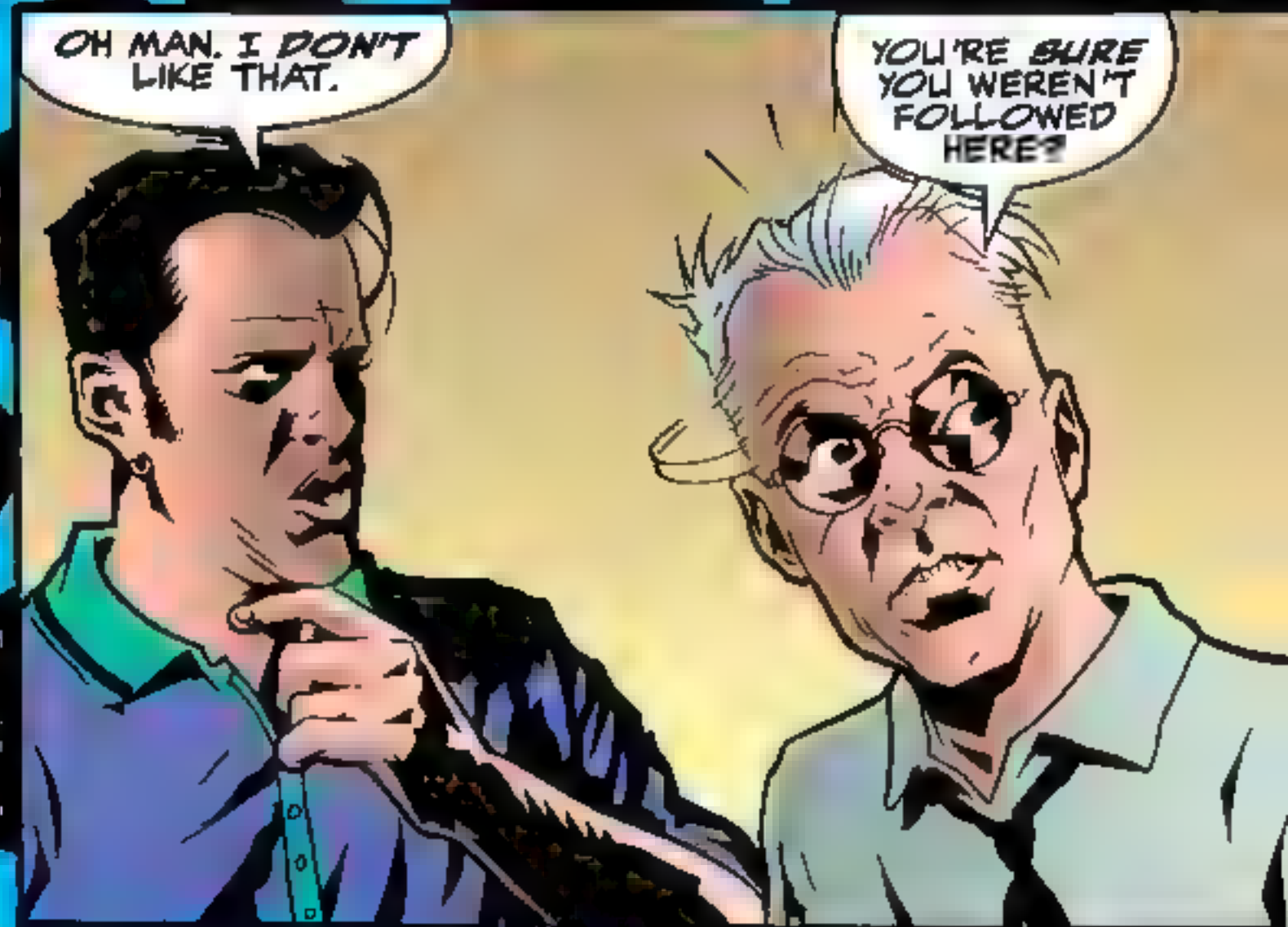
I THOUGHT
I'D SWING BY. IT'S
BEEN SUCH A NICE DAY.
NO CRIME. NO REASON
TO HIT ANYONE. NO
REASON TO GET
HIT.

I'M SEEING
SADIE IN AN HOUR.
WE'RE HAVING A
QUIET ONE IN.



ANYWAY,
I HAVEN'T SEEN YOU
IN A WHILE. THOUGHT
IT'D BE NICE IF YOU AND
ME SPENT SOME
TIME--

I WAS
GOING TO
CALL YOU,
JACK.
SOMETHING'S
COME UP.



OH MAN. I DON'T
LIKE THAT.

YOU'RE SURE
YOU WEREN'T
FOLLOWED
HERE?



I WASN'T
LOOKING IN MY
REAR-VIEW FOR HARRY
PALMER OR NAPOLEON
SOLO, BUT I'M PRETTY
CERTAIN.

THEN STEP
INSIDE, THERE'S
SOMEONE I
WANT YOU TO
MEET.



JACK, THIS
IS JIM BARR. HE
WAS A HERO, LIKE
ME...BACK DURING
THE WAR.



JIM BARR... NO BELLS. I'M SORRY, MR. BARR.

HOW ABOUT BULLET-MAN? DOES THAT GET THEM RINGING?

UHH...NOT REALLY.



I OPERATED IN FAWCETT CITY.

LIKE SPY SMASHER AND THE TURBANED MAGICIAN... WHAT WAS HIS NAME? BARGON?

IBIS.



WHATEVER. TURBAN AND MAGIC. SEEN ONE, SEEN THEM ALL.

TED...
...ARE YOU SURE?



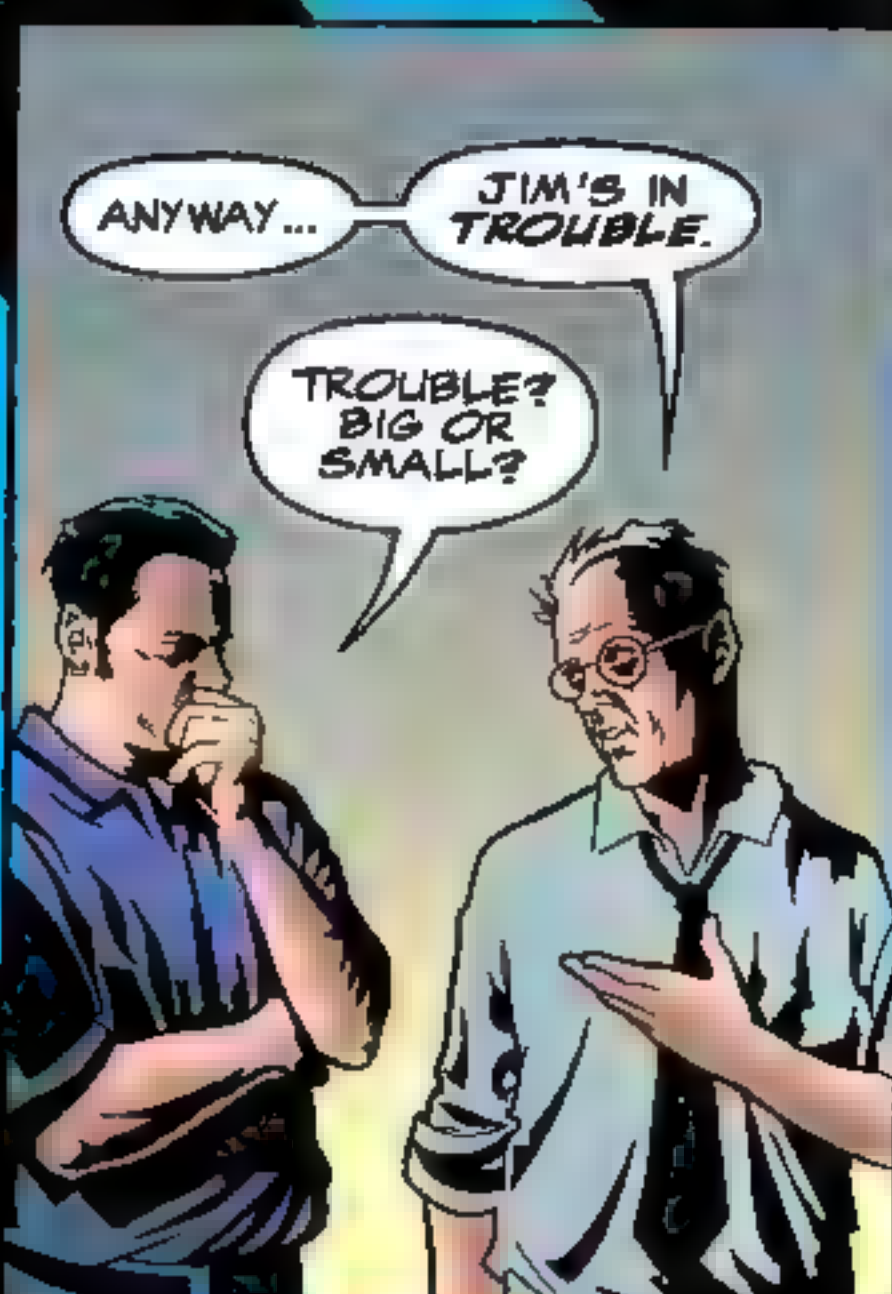
JACK'S IN A GLIB MOOD TODAY, THAT'S ALL. ISN'T THAT RIGHT, SON?

YEAH, I'M SORRY. IT'S JUST...I GUESS I'M KIND OF EMBARRASSED BY NOT KNOWING YOU.



HERE'S A PICTURE OF ME BACK THEN.

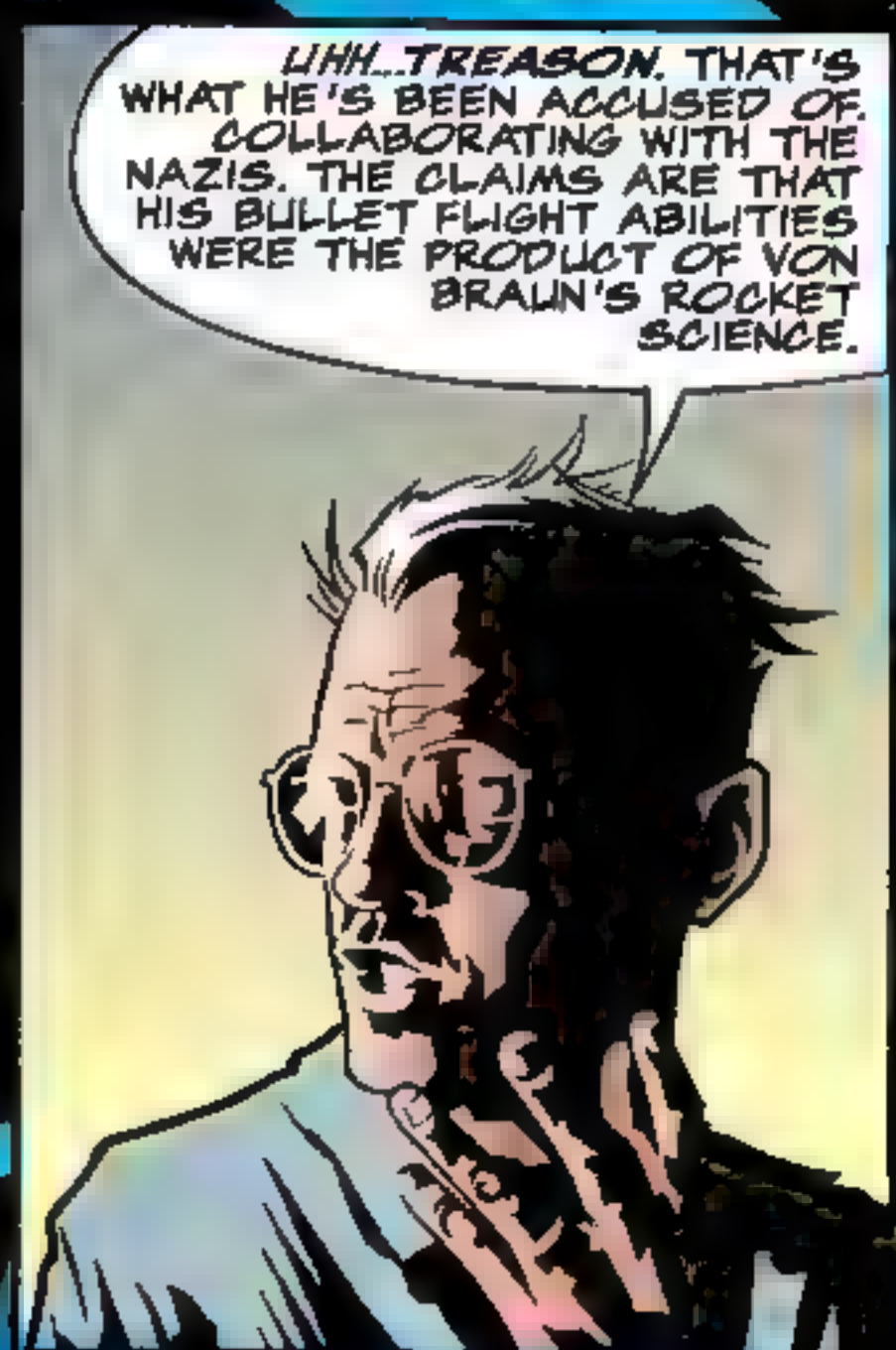
OH, NOW I KNOW. I THOUGHT YOUR NAME WAS ROCKET-MAN.



ANYWAY...

JIM'S IN TROUBLE.

TROUBLE? BIG OR SMALL?



UHH...TREASON. THAT'S WHAT HE'S BEEN ACCUSED OF. COLLABORATING WITH THE NAZIS. THE CLAIMS ARE THAT HIS BULLET FLIGHT ABILITIES WERE THE PRODUCT OF VON BRAUN'S ROCKET SCIENCE.

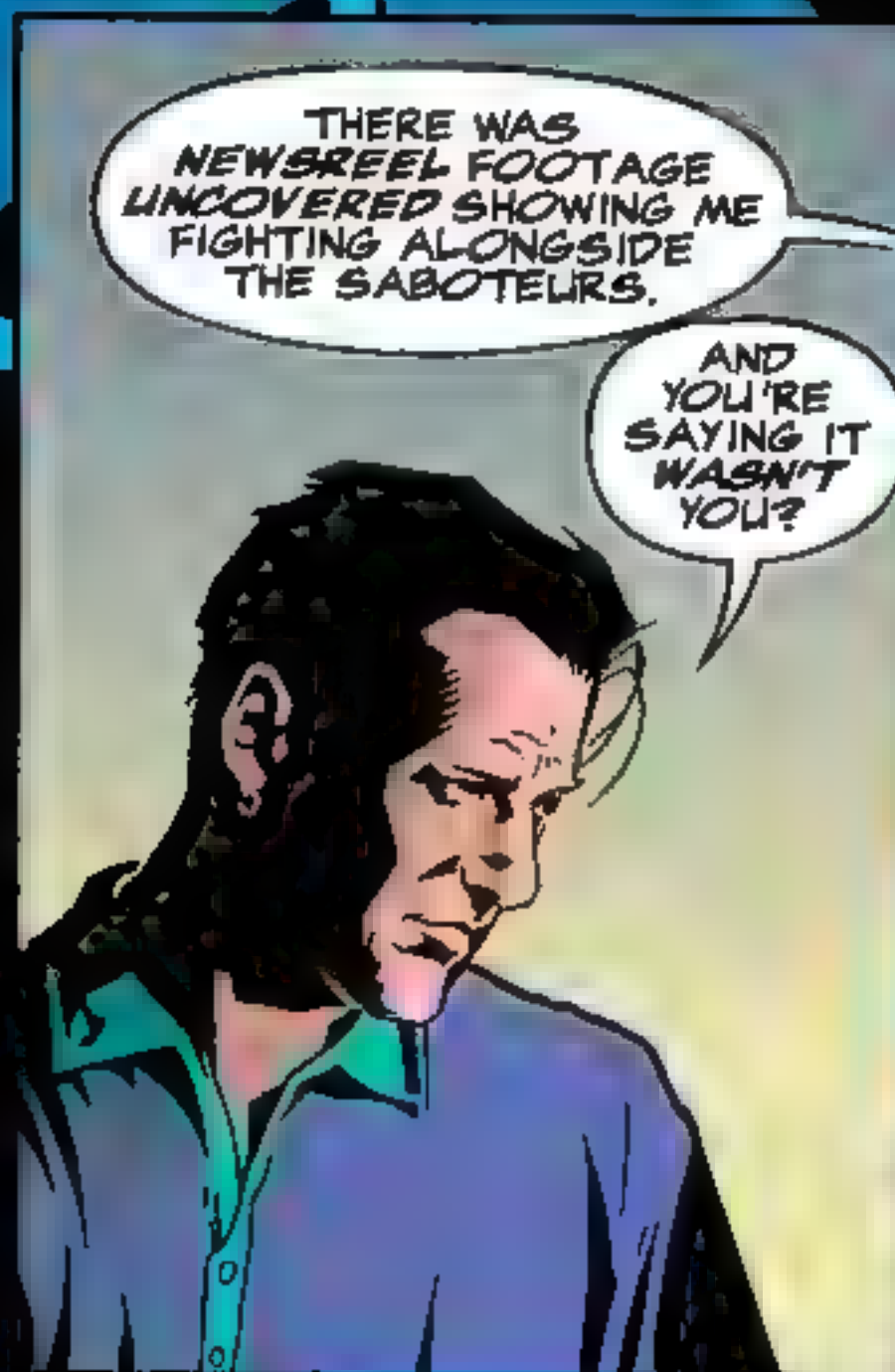


AND THAT SAME ROCKET SCIENCE THEN EMPOWERED A GROUP OF GERMANS TO SINK THE NORMANDIE OCEAN LINER.



FLYING NAZIS. COOL. LIKE IN A REPUBLIC SERIAL OR SOMETHING.

NO. THERE WAS NOTHING COOL ABOUT IT.



THERE WAS NEWSREEL FOOTAGE UNCOVERED SHOWING ME FIGHTING ALONGSIDE THE SABOTEURS.

AND YOU'RE SAYING IT WASN'T YOU?

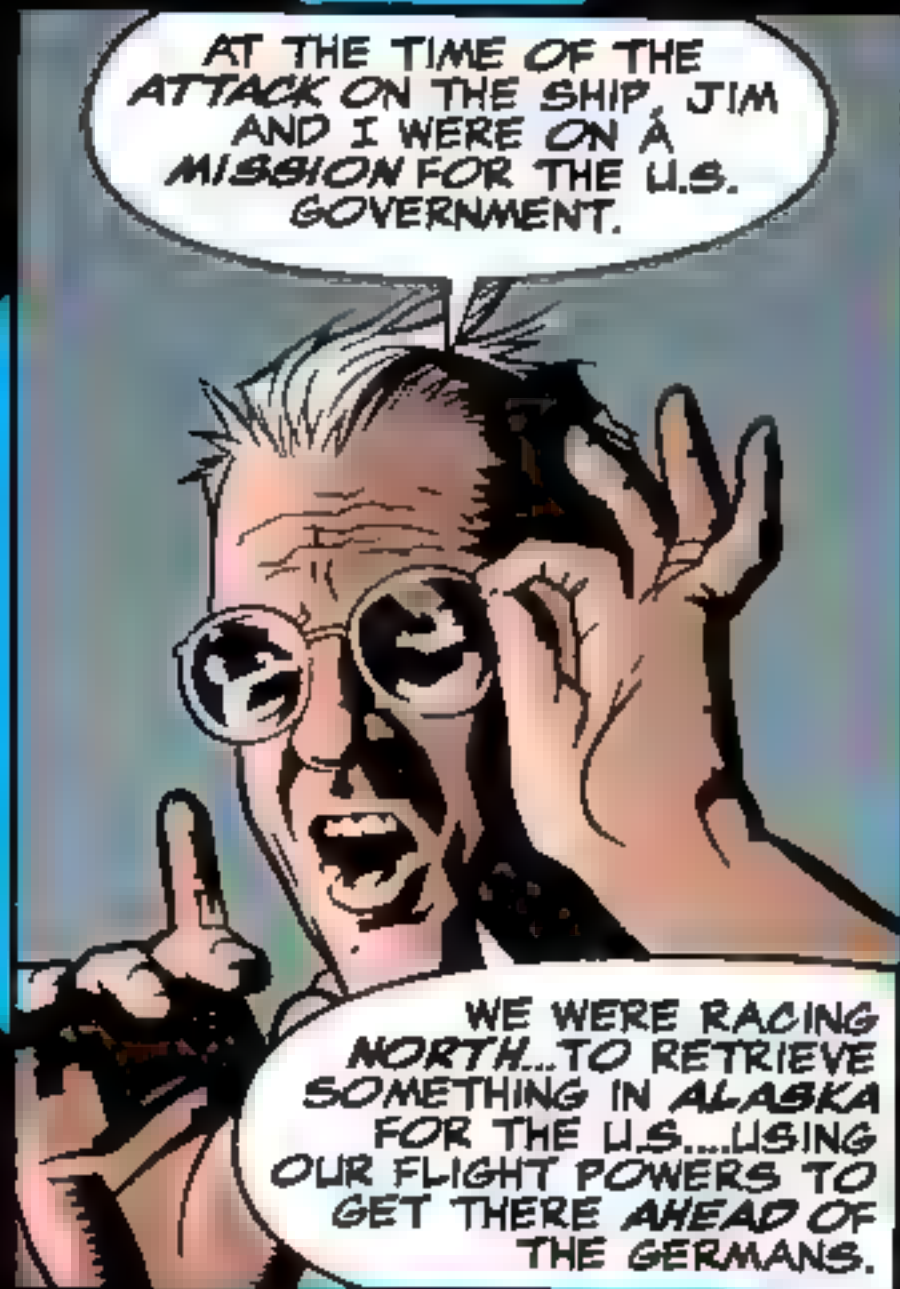


GODDAMN RIGHT IT WASN'T ME!



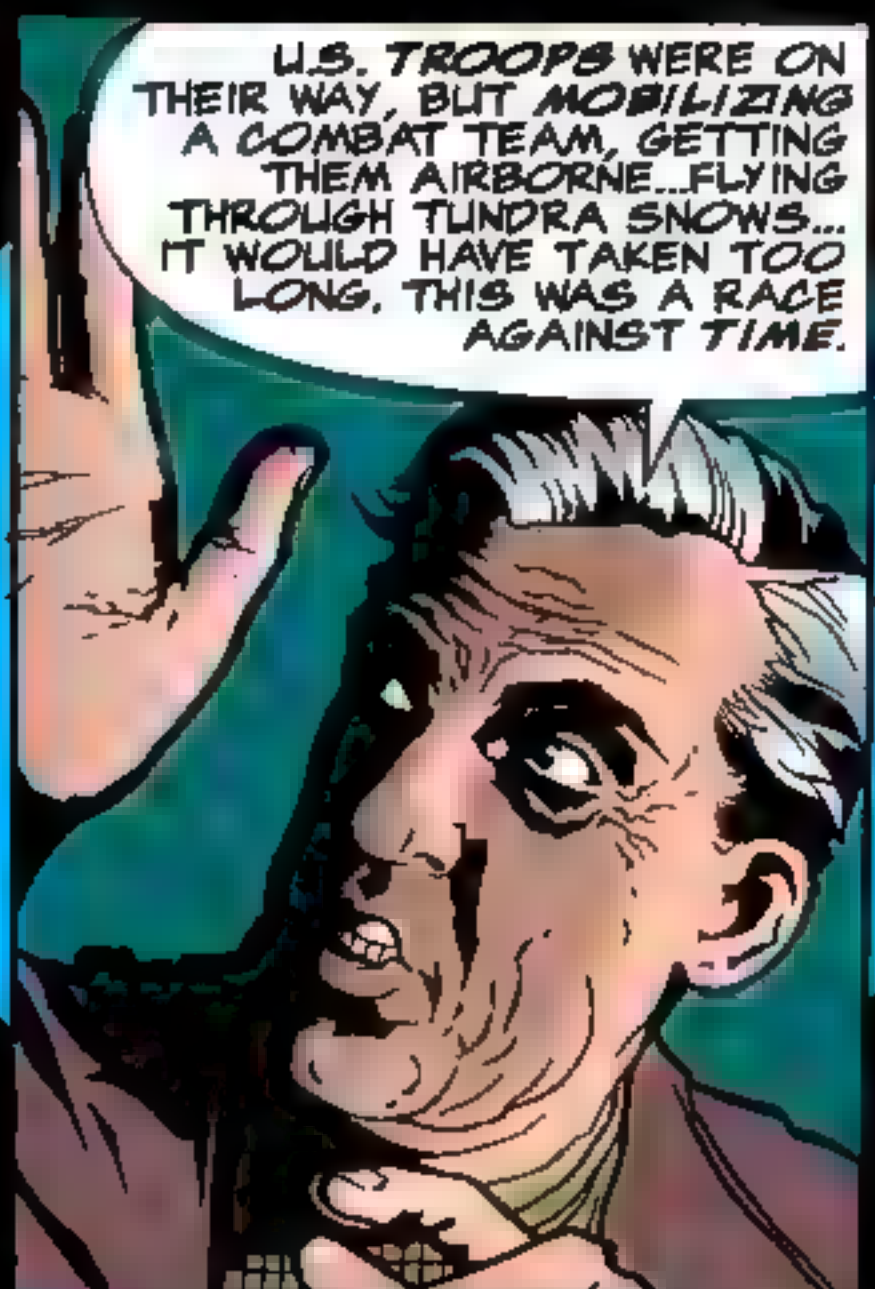
LUCKILY JIM HAS AN ALIBI...ME... WHAT WE DID BACK THEN...

ERR...THIS IS WHERE IT GETS COMPLICATED.

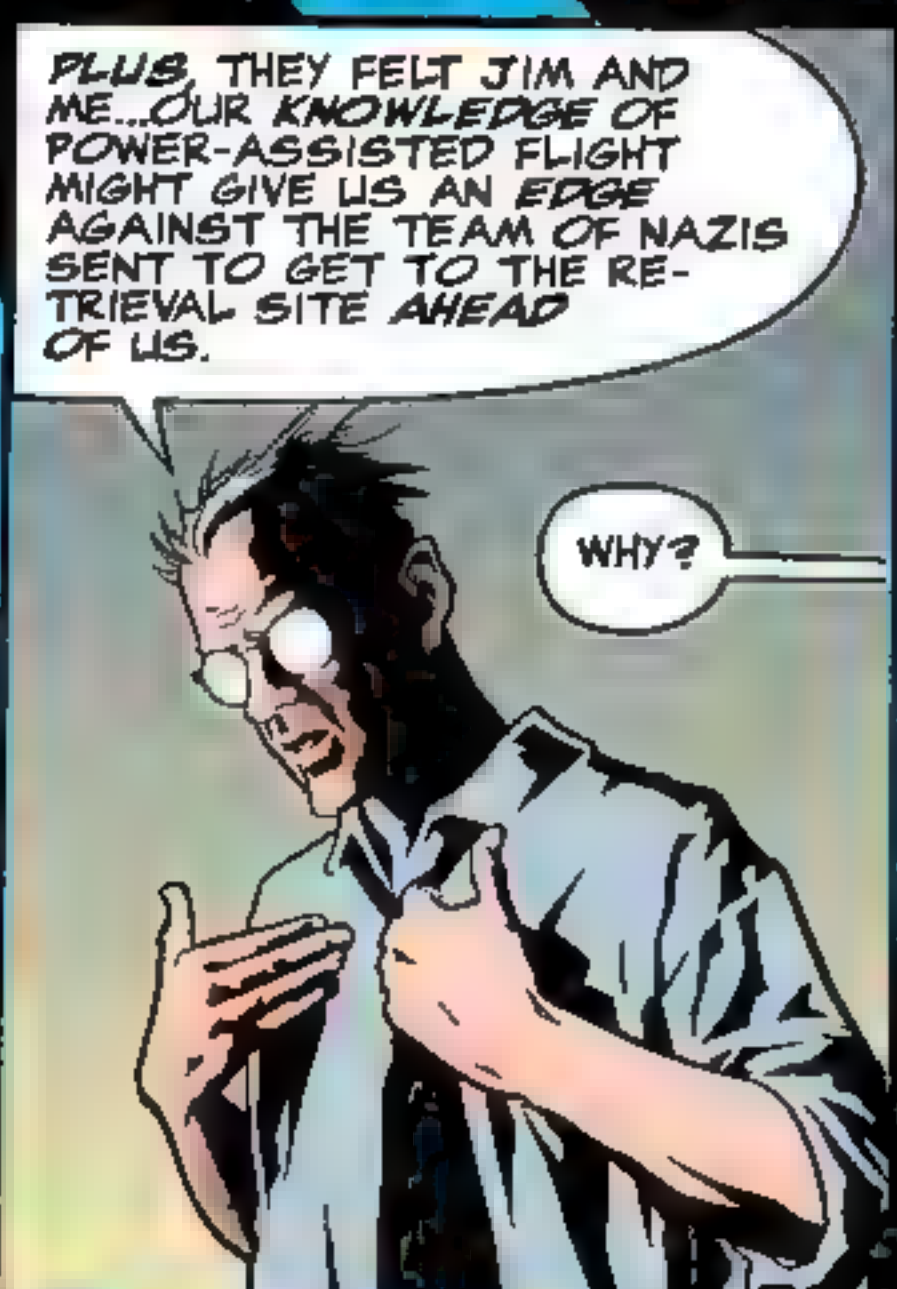


AT THE TIME OF THE ATTACK ON THE SHIP JIM AND I WERE ON A MISSION FOR THE U.S. GOVERNMENT.

WE WERE RACING NORTH...TO RETRIEVE SOMETHING IN ALASKA FOR THE U.S....USING OUR FLIGHT POWERS TO GET THERE AHEAD OF THE GERMANS.



U.S. TROOPS WERE ON THEIR WAY, BUT MOBILIZING A COMBAT TEAM, GETTING THEM AIRBORNE...FLYING THROUGH TUNDRA SNOWS... IT WOULD HAVE TAKEN TOO LONG, THIS WAS A RACE AGAINST TIME.



PLUS, THEY FELT JIM AND ME...OUR KNOWLEDGE OF POWER-ASSISTED FLIGHT MIGHT GIVE US AN EDGE AGAINST THE TEAM OF NAZIS SENT TO GET TO THE RETRIEVAL SITE AHEAD OF US.

WHY?

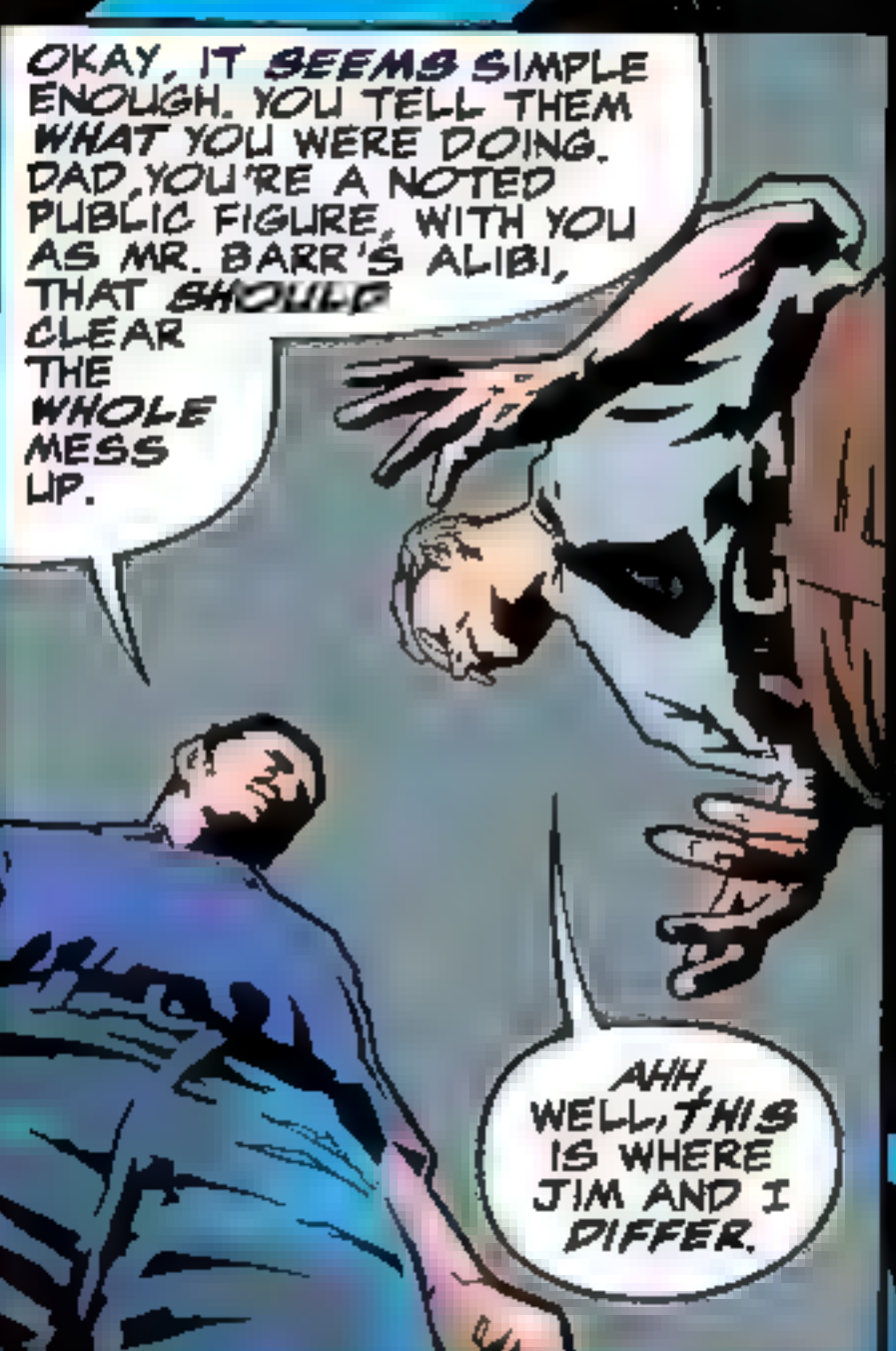


IT WAS MORE JET-POWERED NAZIS.

SOUNDS WILD.

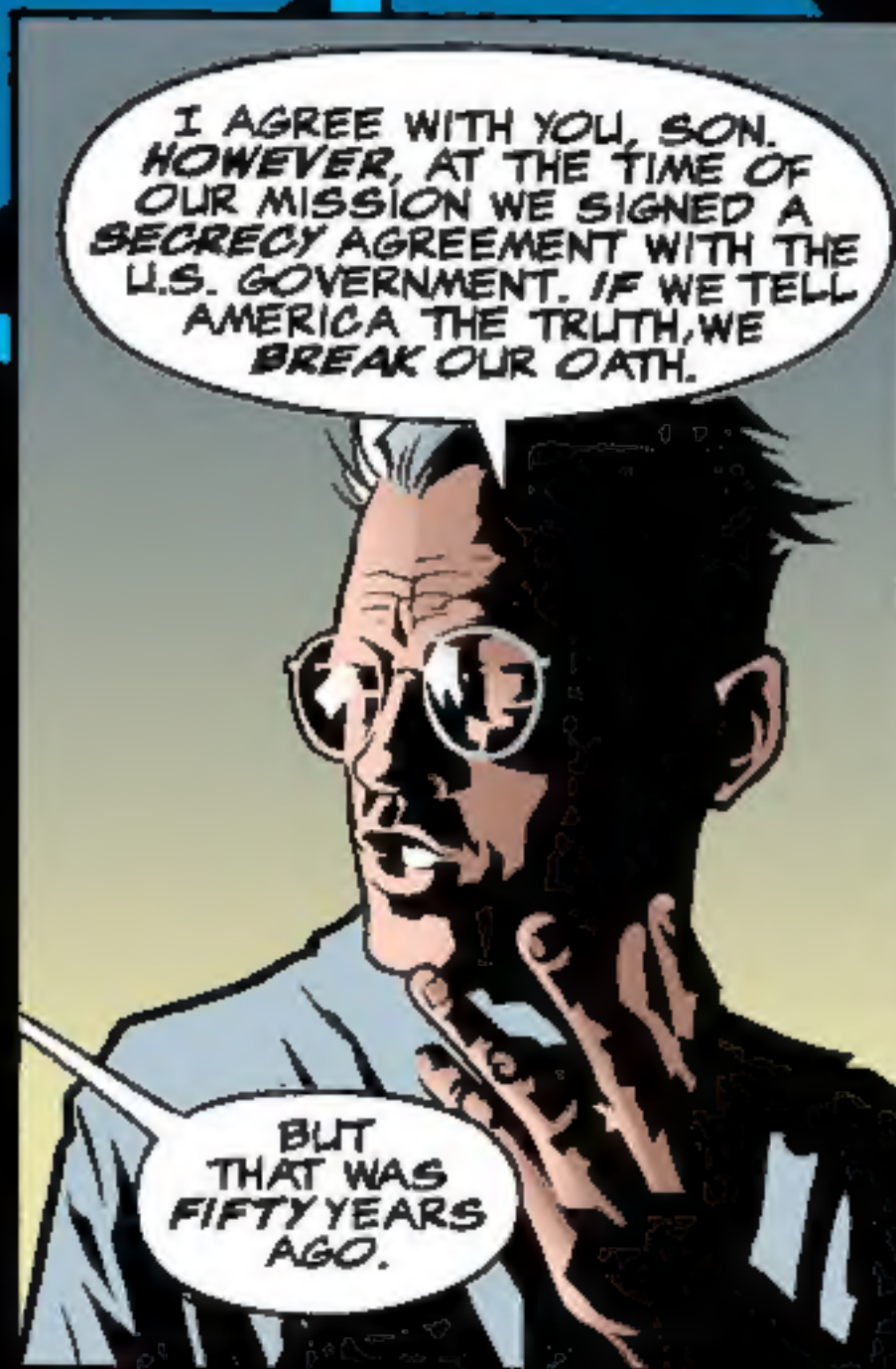
IT WAS.

JIM SAVED MY LIFE AT ONE POINT.



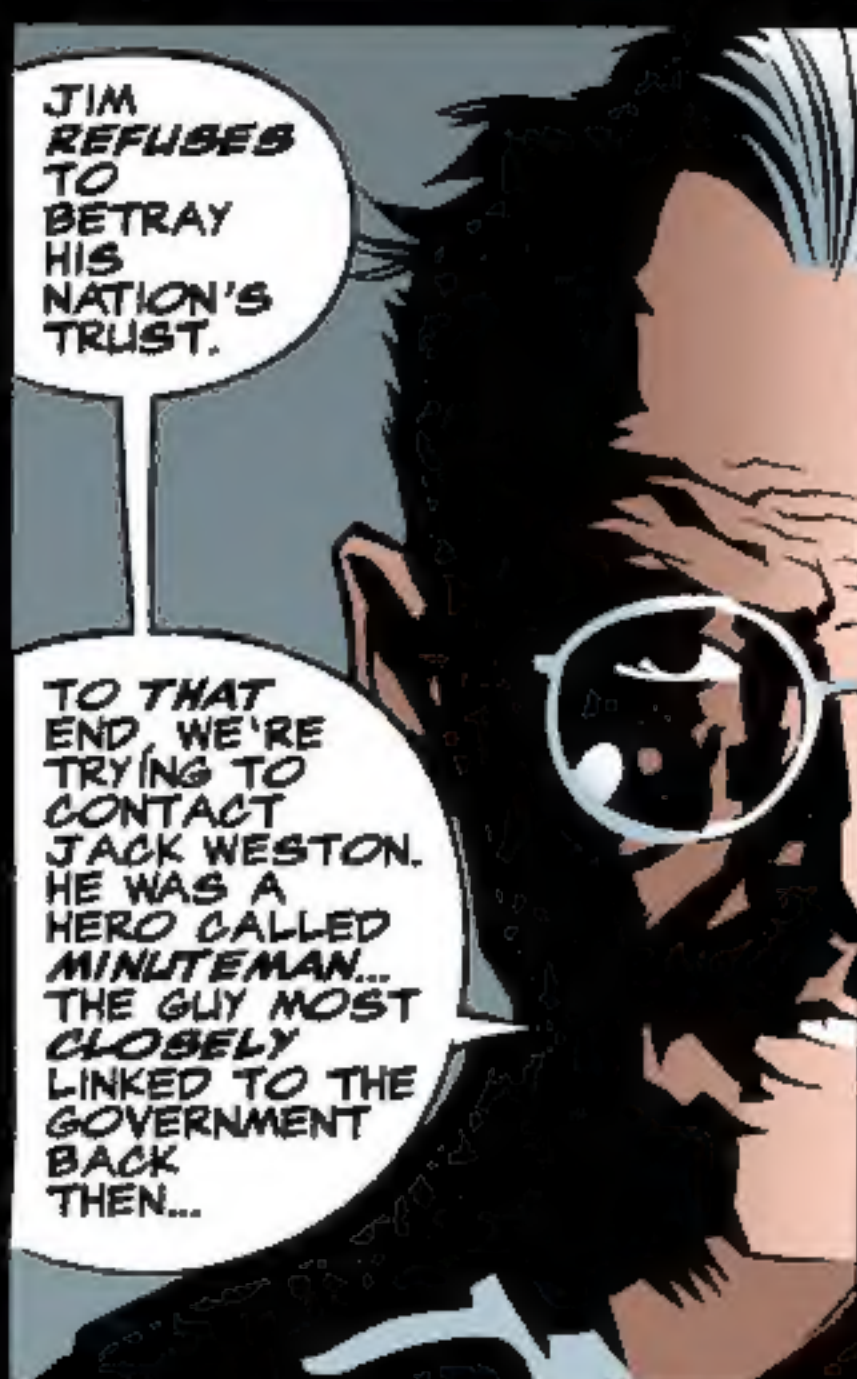
OKAY, IT SEEMS SIMPLE ENOUGH. YOU TELL THEM WHAT YOU WERE DOING. DAD YOU'RE A NOTED PUBLIC FIGURE, WITH YOU AS MR. BARR'S ALIBI, THAT SHOULD CLEAR THE WHOLE MESS UP.

AHH, WELL, THIS IS WHERE JIM AND I DIFFER.



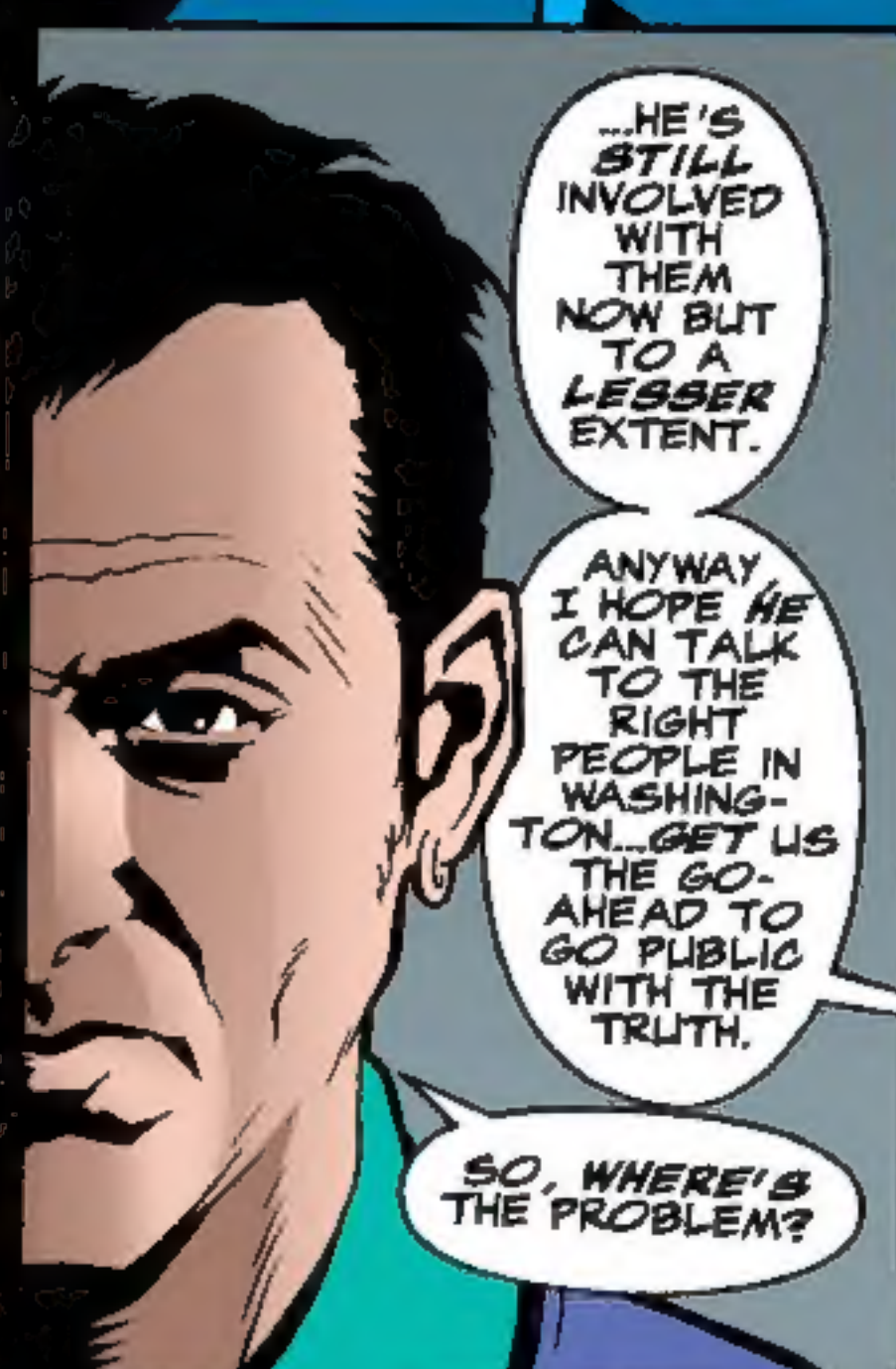
I AGREE WITH YOU, SON. HOWEVER, AT THE TIME OF OUR MISSION WE SIGNED A **SECRECY** AGREEMENT WITH THE U.S. GOVERNMENT. IF WE TELL AMERICA THE TRUTH, WE **BREAK OUR OATH**.

BUT THAT WAS FIFTY YEARS AGO.



JIM REFUSES TO BETRAY HIS NATION'S TRUST.

TO THAT END, WE'RE TRYING TO CONTACT JACK WESTON. HE WAS A HERO CALLED **MINUTEMAN**... THE GUY MOST CLOSELY LINKED TO THE GOVERNMENT BACK THEN...



...HE'S STILL INVOLVED WITH THEM NOW BUT TO A **LESSER** EXTENT.

ANYWAY I HOPE HE CAN TALK TO THE RIGHT PEOPLE IN WASHINGTON...GET US THE GO-AHEAD TO GO PUBLIC WITH THE TRUTH.

SO, WHERE'S THE PROBLEM?



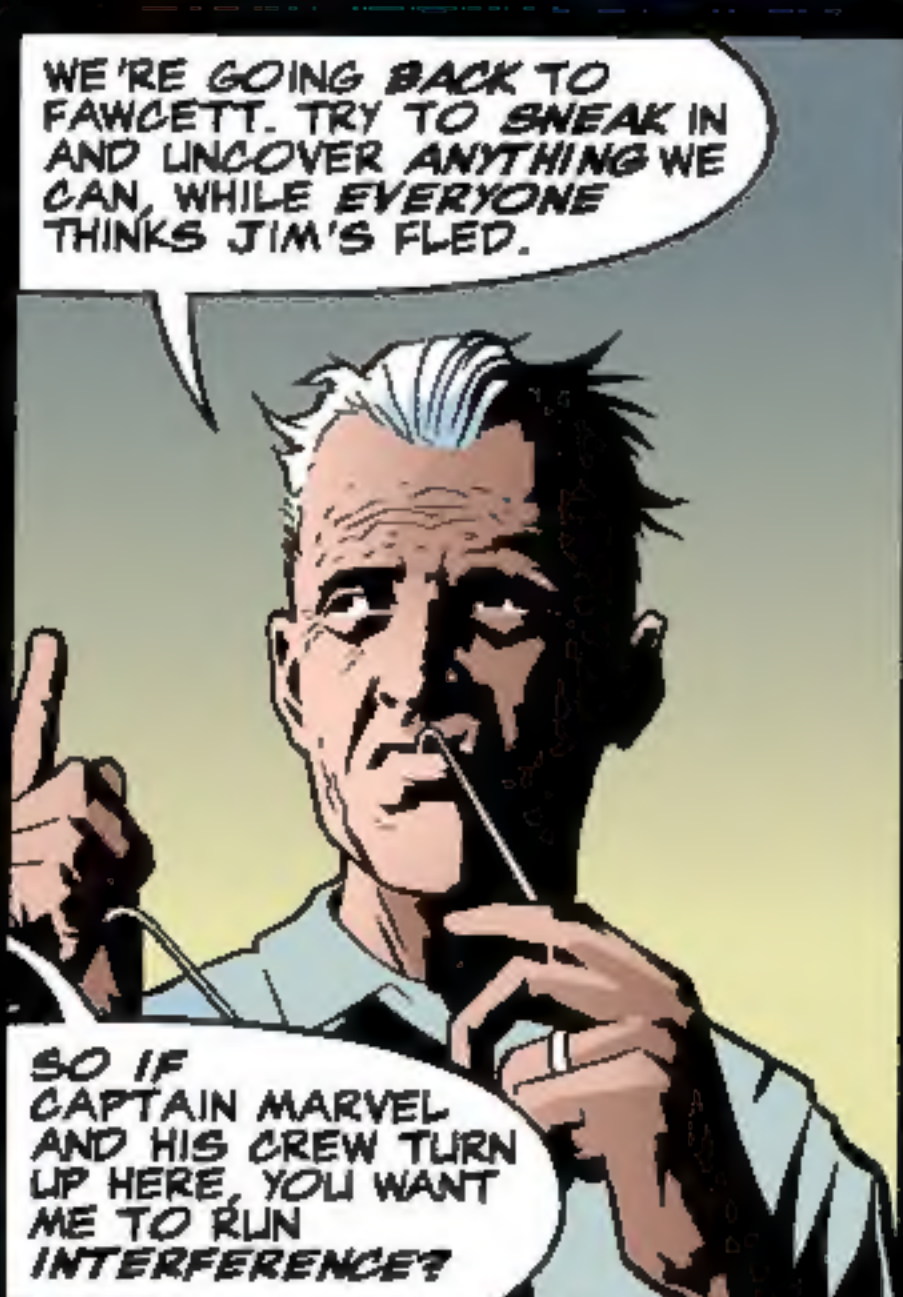
TWOFOLD. FIRSTLY, WE CAN'T LOCATE MINUTEMAN. SECONDLY, IT'S POSSIBLE THAT HEROES FROM FAWCETT CITY WILL FOLLOW ME HERE AND TRY TO BRING ME **BACK**



NOW, REFRESH MY MEMORY, WHO EXACTLY ARE THE HEROES OF FAWCETT CITY NOWADAYS?

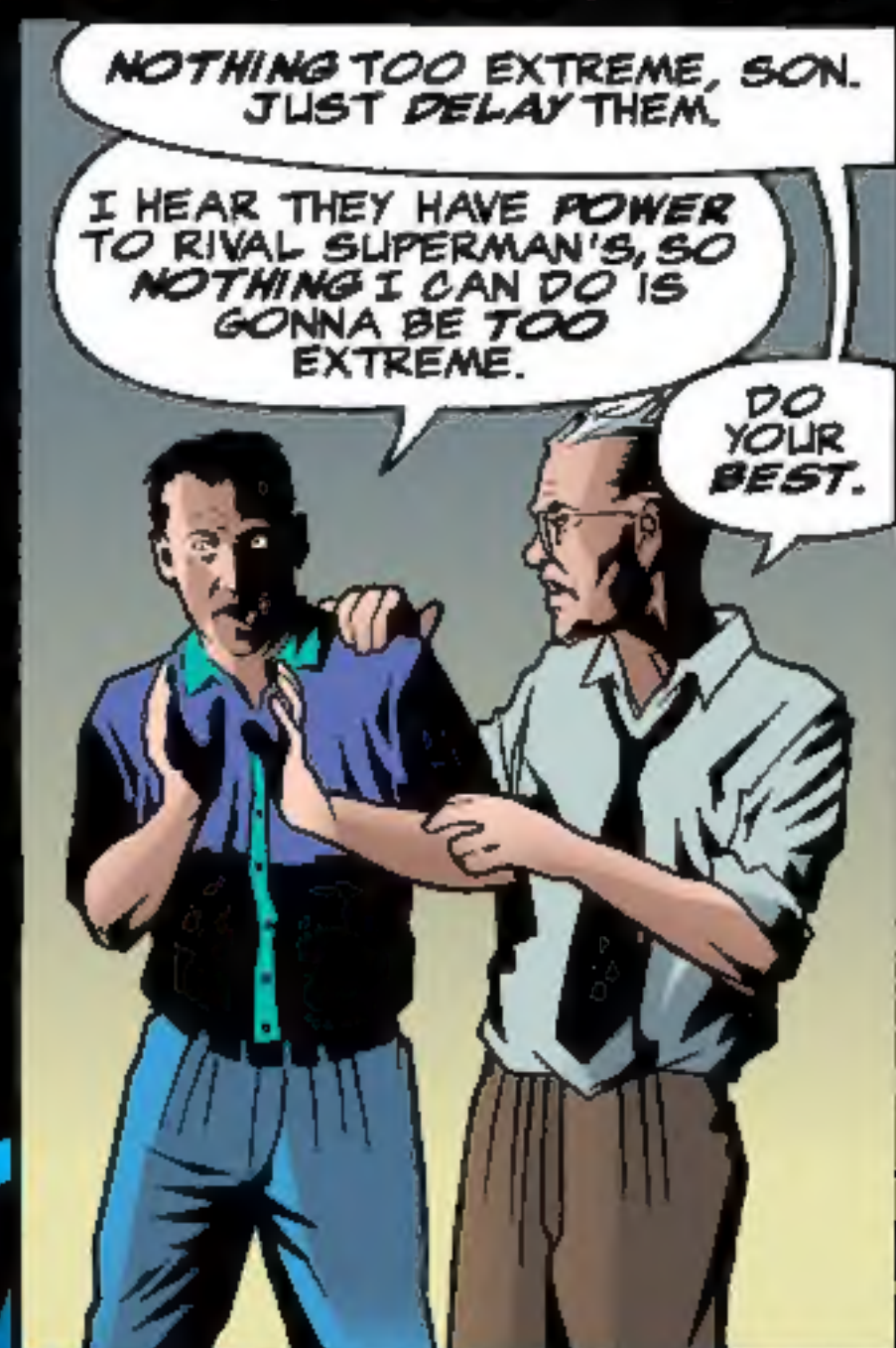
OH, BOY.

THE MARVEL FAMILY.



WE'RE GOING BACK TO FAWCETT. TRY TO **SNEAK** IN AND UNCOVER ANYTHING WE CAN, WHILE EVERYONE THINKS JIM'S FLED.

SO IF CAPTAIN MARVEL AND HIS CREW TURN UP HERE, YOU WANT ME TO RUN INTERFERENCE?



NOTHING TOO EXTREME, SON. JUST **DELAY** THEM.

I HEAR THEY HAVE POWER TO RIVAL SUPERMAN'S, SO NOTHING I CAN DO IS GONNA BE TOO EXTREME.

DO YOUR BEST.



NICE MEETING YOU, MR. BARR.

YOU HAVE MY GRATITUDE, JACK.



IF YOU SAVED MY DAD'S LIFE, MR. BARR, THEN IT'S YOU WHO HAVE MINE.



DAMN.

GOOD DAY BECOMES A
NOT SO GOOD EVENING.



I GOTTA FLY AROUND
LIKE A JACKASS
LOOKING OUT FOR
CAPTAIN MARVEL.

BIG GUY.

HAS A BIG
PUNCH TOO,
I BET.

HITTING
CRESTS OF
AIR. NICE.
SOOTHING.

I DON'T GET TO SEE SADIE
TONIGHT AFTER ALL. ANOTHER
EXAMPLE OF THIS EVENING NOT
BEING NICE. NO WATCHING RIFI
ON VID. NO SEX. NO CHICKEN
POT PIE.




BUT IF I
HOVER HERE.

IF I CLOSE MY EYES
FOR A MOMENT OR TWO...
I CAN THINK OF HER...
MY SADIE.

AND
EVERYTHING
SEEMS FINE
FOR--



STARMAN!



IT'S RUMORED
THAT JIM BARR CAME
HERE! BULLETMAN! IF HE'S
IN TOWN, IT STANDS TO
REASON YOU'D KNOW
WHERE HE IS.

SO HAND HIM
OVER...

...OR FACE
THE POWER OF
Captain
MARVEL

To read the incidents that led up
to this moment from Captain
Marvel's point of view, check out
The Power of Shazam #35.

Then be back here next
issue, when Jack and the
Big Red Cheese get it on!

Deadman Wade

"THIS IS WHAT
AWESOME
LOOKS LIKE".

DCP